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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

October 7, 2005

The Honorable Jo Anne Barnhart
United States Social Security Administration
Windsor Park Building
6401 Security Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Barnhart:

Pursuant to its authority under Rule XXV(k)(1) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, Section 101 of S. Res 445 (108th Congress), and Section 11(e) of S. Res 50 (109th Congress), the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has initiated an investigation into the Nation's preparedness for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina. As you know, the National Response Plan designates specific Emergency Support Functions for your Administration to perform in the case of incidents of national significance. To aid in the Committee's investigation, we request that you provide information (in accordance with the attached definitions and instructions) regarding the Social Security Administration's roles and responsibilities in preparing for and responding to Hurricane Katrina.

Specifically, please:

- (1) Describe each of the Administration's roles, responsibilities and authorities in providing emergency support functions under the National Response Plan. With respect to each specific role, responsibility or authority, please identify:
 - a. The statutory, regulatory or other source for that role, responsibility or authority;
 - b. The component or components within the Administration involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;
 - c. The key personnel involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;

To the extent that the sources identified in response to subpart (a) are not publicly available, please provide copies of them.

- (2) To the extent not provided in response to the previous question, please describe any other roles, responsibilities and authorities of the Administration in preparing

for and responding to a domestic emergency. With respect to each specific role, responsibility or authority, please identify:

- a. The statutory, regulatory or other source for that role, responsibility or authority;
- b. The component or components within the Administration involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;
- c. The key personnel involved in acting pursuant to that authority or discharging that role and responsibility;

To the extent that the sources identified in response to subpart (a) are not publicly available, please provide copies of them.

(2)

- a. Was the Administration asked to act pursuant to its authorities, play any role, or discharge any of its responsibilities specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina? If so, please provide a detailed description of what the Administration was asked to do, by whom it was asked, when it was asked to do it, what specifically it did and when it did it. Please also include the names and titles of key personnel involved in the request or response.
- b. To the extent not included in response to subsection (a), please describe any other actions the Administration took pursuant to its authorities, or any other role or responsibilities it assumed specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina. Please be specific as to what the Administration did, when it did it and the names and titles of key personnel involved.
- c. To the extent not included in response to subsections (a) and (b), please describe any other actions the Administration considered taking or offered to take pursuant to its authorities, or any other role or responsibilities it considered assuming or offered to assume specifically in preparation for or response to Katrina. Please be specific as to what the Administration considered or offered, when it considered or offered it, why such actions weren't taken or such roles or responsibilities weren't assumed, and the names and titles of key personnel involved.
- d. Please describe each instance, if any, in which Administration action was

in any way hindered, delayed, limited or not taken because of concern over whether the Administration had authority to take the action. Indicate key personnel involved and how the issue was resolved.

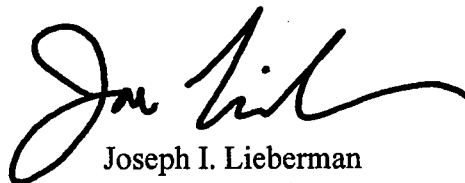
- e. Please describe each instance, if any, in which Administration action was in any way hindered, delayed, limited or not taken because of concern over reimbursement. Indicate key personnel involved and how the issue was resolved.
- (3) Please state the time and date the Administration was first informed that the National Response Plan was being activated in response to Hurricane Katrina. Identify who informed the Administration, who received the information and what specific information was conveyed.
- (4) Please state the time and date the Administration was first informed that any annex to the National Response Plan was being activated in response to Hurricane Katrina. Identify who informed the Administration, who received the information and what specific information was conveyed.

We request you provide the requested information as it becomes available, but not later than November 3, 2005. We thank you and your staff in advance for your cooperation. If you or your staff have any questions concerning this request, please contact Tom Eldridge of the Committee's majority staff at 202-224-4751 or Jason Yanussi of the Committee's minority staff at 202-224-2627.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
Chairman



Joseph I. Lieberman
Ranking Member